1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

843 be avoided. If she walks on a beaver dam, or dips her head
825 into a pool made by this animal, the birth of her infant will be blocked in the same way that the dam restrains a stream. This difficulty can be obviated, however, by dipping up the water with her hands instead of bending her head to the surface to drink. As far as possible, she must avoid being startled by
[774] small animals or reptiles; even if the excitement so caused is too slight to expel her own spirit, it may be sufficient to damage that of the foetus. Such dangers can be countered by means of magical rites (I, p. 720). Her husband is also subject to certain injunctions and prohibitions. If he eats beaver meat his wife's delivery will be difficult. He must preserve a small
[842] piece of the skin or an eye of every animal that he kills; a few days after birth the child is steeped in the smoke of a fire on which these articles have been thrown. This prevents injury from the father's quarry.[1]

A pregnant woman continues to reside in her own house, where her condition is a source of interest to her friends and relatives. There are no midwives with inheritable professional
844 prerogatives, but as the time for delivery draws near, arrange-
[924] ments are made for the mother or some other experienced female relative to be in attendance. It is quite proper for the husband to attend to this point, though it is customary for elderly female relations to do so, sometimes those of the wife, sometimes those of her husband. A woman who, having herself borne children, has assisted at many births with success, is often requested to be present, and it is taken as a matter of course that she will be rewarded for her services.

When the pains of labour begin, the patient leaves the house with her assistant or assistants. In summer the party goes to some lonely spot in the woods where a rude wind-break may have been erected; in winter, to a sheltered spot beneath a
[171] house. No man can be present, a point in which the Bella Coola state that their culture differs from that of the Kwakiutl. The midwife manipulates the infant so that the birth is made

[1] This rite is described in detail later (I, p. 720).

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE5

as easy as possible. Women seldom experience difficulty and suffer, on the whole, less than do white mothers. It is believed that *Snaiarmax*, though invisible, is present on every occasion the rendering of assistance at childbirth is his one kindly act.

The umbilical cord was formerly cut with a mussel shell, but for many years the use of a metal knife has been customary. The after-birth usually comes away easily, but if there is delay hot ashes are placed around the feet and at the back of the woman to accelerate its expulsion. It is immediately buried or placed beneath a large tree in the forest; if burnt, the infant will always be weakly. While one of the assistants disposes of it, another washes the new-born child. The cloths and dishes used for this purpose are burnt; failure to do so is believed to cause the child to become blind through a white film forming over the eyeballs. Then the mother and midwives return to the house with the infant, who is a source of tremendous interest to the community. It is proper for the father to recompense the attendants at once, in accordance with their skill and his generosity. A woman who has had several children often assists the daughter of a friend, then, as she gains more experience, her reputation grows and her help is more commonly sought. At the time of this study, 1922, the sum of $1.50 was considered suitable recompense for a fairly proficient midwife.

A new-born child takes the breast readily and a mother would be considered harsh indeed if she failed to suckle her infant whenever it cried, since scientific hours for feeding are not known. A child is wrapped in a shawl or a blanket and carried by the mother wherever she goes; when in the house it sprawls contentedly on the floor, unhampered by clothing. When the umbilical cord falls, it is preserved by the mother. Soon after birth, the parents make provision for their child's welfare by magical means (I, p. 700). The heavy infantile death-rate of the Bella Coola cannot be attributed to lack of love or care on the part of parents, but the attention lavished is commonly not of the kind that assists a weakly child to survive the perils of infancy.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

the perils of infancy. During this period, the mother observes various magical taboos to ensure the welfare of her offspring, and endeavours to strengthen herself by rubbing her own body with non-odoriferous oils obtained from dog-fish, geese, or fresh olachen. Soft pounded salmon and water are added to an infant's diet as soon as possible, though nourishment from the breast frequently continues until a child is two, or even three years of age. It is not uncommon to delay weaning until the mother is again pregnant, when the child is deterred by the application of soot to the breasts. Marital relations are recommenced as soon as the mother is strong enough; there is no specified period of abstinence, nor does it matter whether or not the woman is lactative.

Occasionally, an infant is born with teeth; such an one is thought to be the reincarnation of a dead ancestor, though no one knows which. A similar belief is held respecting a child with dimples in the lobes of its ears; these are regarded as remnants of the holes pierced for ear-rings. A child that cries in the womb is said to have great intellect.

In former times infanticide was practised for various reasons. If a woman died in giving birth, it was customary for her mother to kill the child unless one of her relatives was able to suckle the motherless infant who was then given to her. It was not unknown for the mother of a large family to ask the midwife to kill the child in order to avoid an addition to her responsibilities. An unmarried girl who became pregnant often went alone to the forest, delivered herself without assistance, and killed her infant. This was considered to be the kindest act, since an illegitimate child was said to be, "Like a Dog." In some cases the prospective mother requested a friend to cause abortion by kneading the stomach and uterus, a method said to be effective and seldom fatal. How to do so is common knowledge, but to practise it is considered disgraceful, and the term *tewaut*, applied to such an one, is among the most foul of Bella Coola opprobriums. It is believed that a woman who has had several children can in some way prevent

Ic McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924)E948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

To Cause Ability in Understanding the Speech of Ravens 825 856 789

It is well known that when ravens croak, they are really speaking, but their language is unintelligible except to one who has learnt it by means of a medicine. One of these is the following:

Catch a raven alive and cut a small piece of flesh from its body, beneath the left wing, taking care not to kill the bird. Release it, after having fed the morsel to the child. An infant so treated will grow up able to learn from ravens of the approach of raiding parties, storms, visitors, and all other news which they constantly circulate in their loud calling. It is said that the last person so endowed was the father of a Kimsquit man about forty years of age in 1922. His ability lasted throughout childhood but he lost it through infraction of a taboo.

The following medicines are used between the ages of one and two: 304 789

To Cause Long Life 856 886

One year after birth, holes are pierced through the lobes of the ears and the nasal septum. In the beginning of time, *Hquentäm* told the forefathers of the Bella Coola that if this were not done, the boy or girl would die young.

To Cause Ability in Hunting 846 856 789 [158]

When the umbilical cord of a female infant falls, her father places it within the knot-hole of a tree, where it is protected from rain but where it rots and is forgotten. A boy's is preserved with care. The parents wrap it in soft goat's wool and place it in the box where the father keeps his most cherished possessions; this causes the child to be careful, and to grow up with a tendency to treasure his acquisitions rather than to dispose heedlessly of them. As the first anniversary of his son's birth approaches, his father begins to observe ceremonial chastity, endeavouring to estimate the time so that its culmin- [715]

Hellwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

ating point shall be one year after the birth. Early on the morning of this day, he takes the umbilical cord and goes far into the mountains until he finds a place where the grass is matted and the earth packed, showing that a mountain goat has slept there. He digs a hole, inserts the cord in it, and covers it with stones, praying as he does so:

"Please, father! May my son be skilful, may he be successful in hunting mountain goats."

This has the effect of showing the child where these animals are to be found. The father then returns home.

Four days later he goes back to the same spot, digs up the umbilical cord, brings it home and hangs it in the doorway of the house. Should this be omitted, the child would have an intense longing to hunt in the mountains and would leave home at the first opportunity, but would be unable to return. The cord is left suspended for four days, then taken to the forest and deposited under an overhanging rock where no water can penetrate. It dries in course of time but no further attention is paid to it.

A child so treated begins to hunt birds and squirrels when he is eight or ten years of age, and later follows mountain goats with obsidian-pointed arrows. This medicine has been handed down in certain families for generations. If a parent, not possessing the prerogative, wishes to have it applied to his child, he requests one who is entitled to use it to perform with his son's umbilical cord in the manner just described. He is later paid for his assistance.

A similar, though simpler medicine is for the father to take the fallen umbilical cord to the mountains immediately and bury it beneath stones where a mountain goat has been lying. Four days later he returns to the spot, digs up the cord, and brings it home, thus ensuring that the child will have no fear of the mountains and will be a successful hunter of mountain goats. In such cases it is customary for the mother to preserve her son's cord during his childhood so that he will not become careless.

1:McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
NE6 Bellacoola NE6

Preventive and Curative Medicines

Medicines of Infancy and Childhood

789 *To Counteract Dangers Incurred During Pregnancy* (two means)

774 (1) As already described (I, p. 96), there is always danger of
843 a person losing his spirit through a sudden start, causing involuntary contraction of the muscles, but pregnant women are
825 especially liable to peril of this kind. Moreover, the unexpected appearance of a toad, rat, or mouse, though insufficient to harm an expectant mother, may suffice to startle the unborn child, or even to destroy his spirit. A woman carefully remembers all experiences of this kind and treats the injury while her infant is crying immediately after birth. If a toad has caused it, she catches one, decorates it with dyed cedar-bark, and places it on the child's stomach, then guides it so that it jumps up the chest to the neck. This is repeated four times. She then sets it down, unharmed on the ground, saying:

"You are the cause of the trouble, please go."

The same rite is carried out for all small mammals, reptiles, and even with birds which have startled a mother by their peculiar behaviour. In some families it is customary to post-
[846] pone the application of this medicine until four days after birth. There is considerable difference of opinion concerning the specific injury; some allege that the spirit of the creature enters the body and, if not counteracted, causes the child to be born sick and feeble.

843 (2) During his wife's pregnancy, a husband must preserve
825 a small portion of the skin of every animal killed. Four days
789 after birth, as the infant lies in its cradle, a small fire is built
[846] beneath and the pieces thrown thereon so that the child is
[761] steeped in the smoke. If this is neglected, the boy or girl will
[774] die during infancy, though the means by which the slain animals accomplish this is not fully understood. Possibly, as in the last instance, their spirits have entered the body. Some hunters preserve an eye from every carcass instead of a piece

6(Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890))1892
NES Bellacoola NES

894 fashioned midwives. The child is washed in warm water. For ten days
[94] the mother must remain in this hut. Father and mother must not go
[95] near the room for a year (according to Hoh'thi'ats, for ten days), else
the salmon would take offense.

55 The child is soon given its first name. On this occasion the whole
[54] tribe is invited to a feast, the name is made public, and the guests receive
[55] small presents. The child retains this name until it becomes a member
[56] of the Kwa'xit, when it is given its Kwa'xit name. This ceremony takes
place after puberty has been reached. About this period the young man
gives his first potlatch and assumes the Qo'mokoa name.

881 Where a girl reaches puberty she must stay in the shed which serves
as her bedroom, where she has a separate fireplace. She is not allowed
to descend to the main part of the house, and must not sit by the fire of
the family. For four days she must remain motionless in a sitting pos-
ture. She fasts during the daytime, but is allowed a little food and
drink at a very early hour in the morning. After this term she may
leave her room, but only through a separate opening. She must not yet
[92] come to the main room. When leaving the house she wears a large hat,
[93] which protects her face against the rays of the sun. It is believed that
if the sun should shine on her face her eyes would suffer. She may
pick berries on the hills, but must not come near the river or sea for
a whole year. She must not eat fresh salmon, else she would lose
[26] her senses, or her mouth would be transformed into a long beak. She
must not chew gum or eat meat (see Fifth Report of Committee,
1888, p. 538).

584 If a young man wishes to marry a girl he goes, accompanied by his
[83] friends, to the house of the girl's father and states his intention. His
friends carry food and presents, and if the father accepts the suit he
sends out a young man, who receives the food and presents and carries
them into the house. Sometimes the father does not accept the offer at
once. In such cases the young man may repeat the same ceremony until
[52] he is finally rejected or accepted. After the time of the marriage has
been agreed upon between the contracting parties, and the day preceding
the marriage has arrived, the young man invites all the people to a feast,
during which he states that he is to be married on the following day.
He asks a number of men, generally from twenty to thirty, and five
[80] women to assist him. On the following forenoon they assemble, and
accompany the bridegroom to the girl's house. They stay outside, and
585 four of the men dance. All of them have their faces painted red. Finally
they enter, and the bridegroom gives a large amount of property to the
girl's father. Then the girl leaves her parents and goes to the bride-
groom, bringing him also a large amount of property which has been
[78] given to her for this purpose by her parents and relatives. He in turn
gives her blankets and other apparel of the best quality, and distributes
presents among her relatives. This is repeated after some time. All he
has given to his bride and her relatives is repaid to him with interest.
A rich girl will repay twice or three times the amount given by the man.
At the time of the marriage the bride's father may promise the groom to
give him his slave's master as soon as the pair have their first child.
[85] The children may belong to the father's or mother's gens, as the parents
may choose.

586 In case of a separation the wife refunds the amount of purchase-
money. The children may stay with either parent, or part of them may